



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101-3140

OFFICE OF THE  
REGIONAL  
ADMINISTRATOR

SEP 1 2011

Michael Finley  
Chairman  
Colville Business Council  
P.O. Box 150  
Nespelem, Washington 99155

Dear Chairman Finley:

Thank you for your letter of July 27 and the enclosed report "Air Quality and Deposition Analysis for the Upper Columbia River Basin." The United States Environmental Protection Agency understands that the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation are concerned about the potential impact of air emissions from the Teck Smelter in Trail, British Columbia. Given the long history of contaminated water discharges from the Trail smelter, the concern with air emissions is understandable. Thank you for raising this issue to my attention and for the modeling report enclosed with your letter.

As you mention in your letter, the EPA is overseeing a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study of the Upper Columbia River. As you correctly point out, to date the investigation has focused on determining the impact of direct discharges from the Smelter to the Columbia River. The EPA does intend to assess impacts to upland habitats from air emissions as part of the RI/FS. Discussions about soil sampling are underway, and we look forward to working with the Tribes on a soil sampling design via the Memorandum of Agreement process. If we determine that higher resolution modeling is needed to guide the sampling design, the report you provided will provide a good start from which to build. In the meantime, I will have my staff follow up with yours to share information from our initial review.

The EPA appreciates the significant resources that the Tribes have dedicated to ensuring the protection of the Upper Columbia River. We are grateful for the Tribes' continued support of the RI/FS process.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. McLerran  
Regional Administrator